

# **CITY OF CROWN POINT LANDSCAPE STANDARDS**

## **A. Purpose and Intent**

Landscaping is necessary for the protection and enhancement of the environment and for the continued vitality of all land uses in the City. The intent of this Section is to promote the public health, safety and welfare by establishing minimum standards for the design, installation, and maintenance of landscape improvement. The requirements of this section are intended to help achieve a number of functional and environment objectives such as:

1. To promote the implementation of the City of Crown Point master Plan and related sub area plans;
2. To aid in stabilizing the environment's ecological balance by contributing to the processes of air purification, oxygen regeneration, groundwater recharge, and storm water runoff retardation, while at the same time aiding in noise, glare and heat abatement;
3. To encourage the preservation of existing trees and vegetation;
4. To provide visual buffering and enhance the beautification of the City;
5. To reduce the physical impact between adjacent land uses by requiring complementary landscape treatments and providing a transitional area adjacent to natural areas;

Note: This document should be considered as a companion document to the City of Crown Point Tree Ordinance #\_\_\_\_\_. Whereas the Ordinance contains the majority of the regulatory authority and general requirements, this document contains the necessary means and methods for achieving compliance with the Ordinance. It is intended to serve as a guidance document to assist plan reviewers, developers, and designers achieve the minimum standards. In case there are conflicts between the requirements contained in this document and the ordinance, the requirements of the Ordinance shall prevail.

## **B. Scope of Application**

The requirements set forth in this section shall apply to all Commercial/Industrial and Multi-family, lots, sites and parcels that are developed or expanded following the effective date of this document. No site plan that is reviewed shall be approved unless the site plan shows required landscaping consistent with the provisions of this section.

1. Where landscaping is required, a building permit shall not be issued until the required landscape plan is submitted and approved, and a certificate of occupancy shall not be issued unless provisions set forth in this section have

been met or cash escrow has been posted in accordance with the provisions set forth in the section.

2. The Planning Commission may determine existing landscaping or screening, which is intended to be preserved, would meet the intent of this section. The Planning Commission may also determine that dimensional conditions unique to the parcel would prevent development of required greenbelts, buffer zones, parking lot landscaping or interior requirements. If such determination is made, a waiver from or modification of the landscaping provisions of this section in consideration of, but not limited to, the following criteria:
  - a. Presence of existing natural vegetation
  - b. Topography
  - c. Existing wetland, floodplain and poor soils areas
  - d. Existing and proposed building placement
  - e. Building heights and views
  - f. Types and distance to adjacent land uses
  - g. Dimensional conditions unique to the parcel
  - h. Provision of adequate sight distances for motorists
  - i. Health, safety and welfare of the City
  - j. Future land use proposed in the City Master Plan
  - k. Drainage conditions

#### C. Landscape Plan Specifications

1. **Minimum Requirements.** The requirements contained in this section are considered the minimum necessary to achieve the intent of this section. In several instances these standards are intentionally flexible to encourage flexibility and creative design. The requirements of this section are minimum requirements, and nothing herein shall preclude a developer and the City from agreeing to more extensive landscaping to further improve the function, appearance and value of the property.
2. **LANDSCAPE PLAN REQUIRED. A SEPARATE DETAILED PROFESSIONAL LANDSCAPE PLAN MUST BE SUBMITTED AS PART OF THE SITE PLAN REVIEW.**
3. When two or more require landscape areas overlap the more stringent requirements shall apply.
4. **Required Information.** The landscape plan shall demonstrate that all requirements of this section are met and shall include the following information.
  - a. Illustrate location, spacing, species, and size of proposed plan material;
  - b. Separately identify compliance with the minimum numeric requirements for greenbelts, buffer zones, parking lot trees, detention ponds and other required interior landscaping. Required trees or material can not be double counted;
  - c. Identify trees and other landscape elements to be preserved; the following tree protection measures shall be required on all sites:
    1. Prior to construction activities, a sturdy fence or barrier should be erected around designated trees for protection at

- a minimum distance of one linear foot for every inch of DBH. No machinery, tools, chemicals, or temporary soil deposits may be permitted within this area.
  - 2. Tunneling shall be used for utility placement in all areas where trees are to be preserved. If trenches must be used, they should be planned for minimal root damage.
  - 3. Soil grading around preserved trees shall be avoided. A depth of no more than six inches of soil may be placed over tree roots within the protected area, nor shall soil be graded away.
  - 4. Special concern should be given to the preservation of mature trees and those trees on the Priority Tree List during site (re)development.
- d. Provide significant construction details to resolve specific conditions such as limits of grading adjacent to areas with trees and vegetative cover to be preserved, tree wells to preserve existing trees or culverts to maintain natural drainage patterns;
  - e. Identify grass areas and other methods of ground cover; and
  - f. A site plan shall be submitted which depicts the general location of any existing tree canopy in relation to existing and proposed site improvements.

#### **D. Design Standards**

All landscaping shall conform to the following standards:

1. **Interior Landscaping Standards:** For all uses, except one and two family residential, all developed portions of the site shall conform to the following general landscaping standards, except where specific landscape elements, such as a buffer zone, greenbelt, parking lot landscaping or detention and retention pond plantings are required:
  - a. All portions of the site shall be planted with grass, ground cover, shrubbery, or other suitable plan material, except those areas not covered by buildings, parking areas, driveways, signs, water surfaces, paved patios, terraces, sidewalks and similar site features.
  - b. Landscape areas shall be designed to soften the appearance of buildings, screen service areas, provide shade and ensure adequate sight visibility for motorists, adequate clearance for pedestrians and vehicles, clearance from overhead utility lines, adequate separation from underground utilities and accessibility to fire hydrants.
  - c. Interior landscaping areas shall include open area remaining after required landscape areas have been accounted for. Such area shall include a mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs provided at the following proportions:
    1. One (1) deciduous or evergreen tree for each eight hundred (800) square feet. Note: Five (5) shrubs may be planted in lieu of one (1) tree.

2. One (1) shrub for each two-hundred and fifty (250) square feet.

- d. In consideration of the over-all design and impact of the landscape plan, the Planning Commission may modify or adjust the requirements outlined herein for landscaping, provided that any such adjustment is in keeping with the intent of this section.

**E. Greenbelt Standards:** (front yard setback area) a greenbelt is the land abutting a public street, private street or access drive that shall be reserved as a landscape area to serve as an obscuring screen, noise abatement and visual enhancement along roadway corridors.

**1. Greenbelt Plantings Requirements**

- a. The greenbelt shall contain a minimum of one (1) canopy tree and five (5) shrubs per forty (40) linear feet, or fraction thereof, of the entire road frontage.
- b. The frontage calculation shall include any openings for driveways, sidewalks or easements with the number of trees.
- c. Fractions of trees shall be rounded upward to the nearest whole number.
- d. The greenbelt shall contain only living materials and planting beds with the exception of approved sidewalks, bike paths, signs, driveways, essential services, and detention ponds as dictated by site conditions.
- e. Greenbelt plantings shall be arranged to emulate the landscape character of the surrounds areas.
- f. Greenbelts shall be designed to ensure adequate sight visibility for motorists, adequate clearance for pedestrians and vehicles, clearance from overhead utility lines, adequate separation from underground utilities and accessibility to fire hydrants. Where such conditions prohibit full compliance, the Planning Commission may adjust the location of the required materials.

**F. Buffer Zones:** A buffer zone is a landscape area which serves to visually obstruct views from abutting uses. The Planning Commission has the discretion to modify these requirements as appropriate to adjust to site conditions or uses proposed. A buffer shall be provided between the subject site and all adjacent properties as follows:

Subject Site	Adjacent To	Buffer Zone Type
Multiple Family District or Use	Single Family Residential District or Use	Type B
Institutional Uses	Any Residential District or Use	Type B
Business and Office District or Use	Any Residential District or Use	Type A
Industrial District or Use	Any Business or Office District or Use	Type B
Industrial District or Use	Any Residential District or Use	Type A
Industrial/Industrial	Industrial	N/A

1. **Type “A” Buffer Zone.** One (1) large deciduous canopy tree and one (1) ornamental tree and four (4) shrubs or one (1) evergreen tree, one (1) large deciduous canopy tree and four (4) shrubs per forty (40) linear feet along the property line, rounded upward.
2. **Type “B” Buffer Zone.** One (1) large deciduous canopy tree and four (4) shrubs, or one (1) evergreen tree and four (4) shrubs per forty (40) linear feet along the property line, rounded upward.
4. **Buffer Zone Width Required.** At a minimum, the width of the buffer shall be equal to the required building setback. Set setback area may be considered for the area used for buffer zone.
5. **Note: Buffer Zones are not required between two adjacent industrial properties.** However all industrial properties still require green belt areas and must meet the minimum tree planting requirements.

**G. Required Parking Area Landscaping:** All parking areas, associated drive aisles, loading areas, and other paved ground surface areas used for vehicular parking shall have internal landscaping to provide visual and climatic relief from broad expanses of pavement and to channelize and define logical areas for pedestrian and vehicular circulation. The following parking area landscaping is required.

1. Required parking area landscaping shall be placed within the parking lot envelope, defined as the area including the parking lot surface and extending the (10) feet from the edge of the pavement.
2. One (1) canopy tree shall be required for each 2,000 square feet of the total paved surface, including parking, loading and driveways. The number of required trees shall be rounded upward to the nearest whole number. At least two (2) parking lot trees shall be provided on each site.
3. If not adjacent to a buffer zone or greenbelt, a minimum of one-third (1/3) of the required trees shall be placed within the paved portion of the parking lot.
4. Trees shall have a minimum clearance of six (6) feet between the ground and the lowest branches.
5. Not more than twenty (25) parking spaces shall be permitted in a continuous row without being interrupted by landscaping.
6. Landscaping parking lot islands shall meet the following requirements:
  - a. Each separate landscape area shall be a minimum of one hundred and thirty (130) square feet.
  - b. Each parking lot island shall be a minimum of nine (9) feet wide.
  - c. The island shall be two (2) feet shorter than adjacent parking spaces.
  - d. A minimum curve radius of nine (9) feet is required.
  - e. Each island shall contain at least one (1) tree.

7. Required Landscaping for Loading and Outdoor Storage Areas: The Planning Commission has the discretion to increase the landscape requirements of this section in order to properly screen loading areas and outdoor storage areas from abutting land uses and streets.

**H. Detention and Retention Ponds:** For sites requiring detention or retention ponds, the following landscaping is required.

1. To the extent possible, pond configuration shall be incorporated into the natural topography of the site. Where these requirements are not practical, the pond shall be shaped to emulate a natural formed 'free form' depression and shall be part of the natural landscape and open space system of the site.
2. The edge of the pond shall consist of sculptured landforms to filter and soften views of the pond.
3. Plantings shall replicate a natural environment. Trees and shrubs shall be clustered around the basin and contain a variety of plant material.
4. Trees and shrubs should be planted in a natural pattern and are not limited to strict placement along the edge of the pond. Trees and shrubs planted below the water line of the pond must be tolerant of wet or moist soil conditions. The location of plant material shall be done in consideration of the need to provide access for a minimize disruption of plant material during routine pond maintenance.
5. Plantings shall be provided a rate of one (1) canopy tree or two (2) ornamental trees and one (1) large shrub or two (2) small shrubs per fifty (50) linear feet of pond perimeter as measured along the top elevation of the pond bank.

**I. Specifications for Landscape Improvements and Plant Materials**

1. All plant material shall be hardy to the City of Crown Point, be free of disease and insects, and conform to the American Standard for Nursery Stock of the American Nurserymen.

**J. Licensing/Insurance**

Subject to regulations of Section 120.02 of the City Code.

**M. Standards**

3. Minimum Sizes and Spacing. The minimum plant sizes shall be provided in accordance with the following:

Plant Type	Minimum Plant Size	Spacing Requirements
Large Deciduous Canopy Trees	Two (2) inch caliper;	Forty (40) ft on center
Ornamental Trees	Two (2) inch caliper Six (6) ft height	Forty (40) ft on center
Evergreen Trees	Six (6) ft height	Forty (40) ft on center

Large Deciduous Shrubs	Two (2) ft height	Forty (40) ft on center
Upright Evergreen Shrubs	Two (2) ft height	Forty (40) ft on center

\*NOTE: If trees and shrubs are grouped, spacing on deciduous trees are to be forty (40) feet, evergreen trees fifteen (15) feet and shrubs three (3) to four (4) feet.

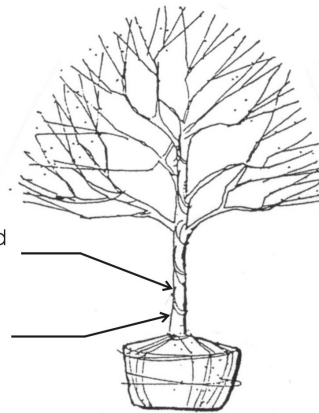
## Plant Material Measurements

### Deciduous Canopy Tree

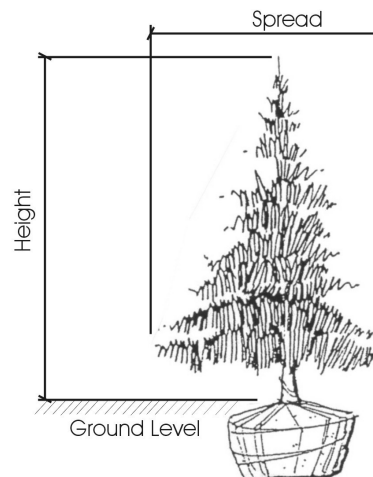
Tree Caliper Measurements-  
For new trees only, see Woodland  
Protection Ordinance for measurement  
of existing trees

Take measurement 12" above ground  
level if tree caliper is 4" or more

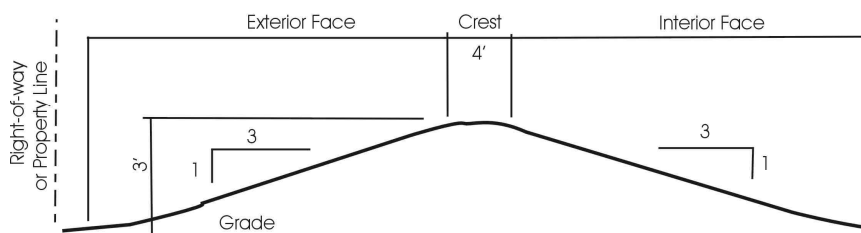
Take measurement 6" above ground  
level if tree caliper is less than 4"



### Tree or Shrub Height



4. **Mixing of Species.** The overall landscape plan shall no contain more than twenty-five (25%) of any one (1) tree/shrub species. The use of native species and mixture of trees from the same species association is strongly encouraged.
5. **Trees Not Permitted.** Note: see City of Crown Point prohibited tree list maintained by the Tree Board.
7. **Proximity to Utilities.** Plant material shall not be located in a manner that will interfere with or cause damage to underground utility lines, public roads or other public facilities.
9. **Landscape Berms.** Where provided, landscape berms shall conform to the following standards:
  - a. The berm shall be at least three (3) feet above the grade elevation.
  - b. Sides of the berm shall be constructed with slopes no steeper than one (1) foot vertical for each three (3) feet horizontal.
  - c. Berms shall have a crest area of at least four (4) feet on the top.
  - d. In measuring slope and height, grade elevation shall be the ground elevation at the property line adjacent to the proposed berm.
  - e. The exterior face of the berm shall be constructed as an earthen slope with a retaining wall or terrace.
  - f. Side slopes shall be protected from erosion by sod, seed or other living ground cover. If slopes are seeded, they shall be protected until the seed germinates and a permanent cover is established.



10. **Regulations Pertaining to Landscaping Areas Used for Sight Distance:** When an access drive intersects a public right-of-way or when the subject property abuts the intersection of a public right-of-way, all landscaping within the corner



triangular areas described below shall permit unobstructed cross-visibility. Shrubs located in the triangular area shall not be permitted to grown to a height of more than thirty (30) inches above the pavement grade at the edge of the pavement. Portions of required berms located within sight distance triangular areas shall not exceed a height of thirty (30) inches above the pavement grade at the edge of the pavement. Trees may be maintained in this area provided that all branches are trimmed to maintain a clear vision for a vertical height of ten (10) feet above the roadway surface. Landscaping, except grass or ground cover, shall not be located closer than three (3) feet from the edge of a driveway.

The triangular areas referred to above are:

- a. The area formed at the corner intersection of a public right-of-way and an access drive, two (2) sides of the triangle area being twenty (20) feet in length measured along the right-of-way line and access drive line and the third side being a line connecting these two (2) sides.
- b. The area formed at a corner intersection of two (2) public right-of-way lines, the two (2) sides of the triangular area being twenty (20) feet in length measured along the abutting public rights-of-way lines and the third side being a line connecting these two (2) sides.

#### **N. Minimum Standards for Installation and Maintenance**

1. **Timing of Planting.** All required materials shall be planted prior to issuing a Certificate of Occupancy. In the event that the project is completed during a time of year when planting is impractical, a financial guarantee is required.
2. **Completion of Improvements.** Tree stakes, guy wires, and tree wrap shall be removed after completion of the initial growing season.
4. **Maintenance.** The owner of the property shall be responsible for the regular maintenance of all landscaping. Landscaped areas and plant materials required by the section shall be kept free from refuse and debris. Plant materials, including lawn, shall be maintained in a healthy growing condition, neat and orderly in appearance per the intent of the approved site plan. If any plant material required with an approved site plan dies or becomes diseased, it shall be replaced within thirty (30) days written notice from the City or within an extended time period as specified in said notice.
5. If additional building structures are added, they must comply with the landscape standards herein. (Section 150.258)

#### **O. Definitions**

Caliper: a caliper is the diameter measurement of the trunk taken 6 inches above ground level.

Diameter Breast Height (DBH): the diameter of a tree in inches 4 ½ feet above the ground.

Person: a persona shall be defined as any individual, corporation, business or any other entity, whether private or governmental, including the City of Crown Point.

Public Property: all property owned by the City of Crown Point or any agency or department thereof and all property included in the Public Way as defined by the Crown Point Zoning Ordinance.

Tree: a woody, perennial plant, ordinarily with one main stem or trunk, which develops many branches and which ordinarily, grows to a height of ten feet or more with a diameter in excess of 6 inches at a height of five feet.

Tree Canopy: shall mean the area covered by tree stems, branches and leaves s viewed overhead. Canopy shall be quantified in square foot coverage.